

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/978,021
Reply to Office Action of September 24, 2003

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated September 24, 2003.

35 USC 103 Rejections

Claims 1-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art of the instant disclosure in view of Kuzell, further in view of GB '384.

The present invention is an arrangement of industrial plants placed in close proximity to each other including an oil refining plant, an oil-fired power plant, a cement plant and a steel making plant. Transporters interconnect the plants so that products and waste products from each plant may be transported to another plant for use as power or raw material. The cement plant may receive spent catalyst waste from the oil refining plant, drain sludge from the oil refining plant, slag and dust from the steel making plant.

The Admitted Prior Art (APA) discloses "efficiency of energy utilization for heat and power is not so high on the whole" and that "waste materials are mostly transported to other places for disposal, and effective utilization of waste materials is not considered."

Kuzell discloses in the Drawing that calcium-aluminum-silicate slag is sent to a portland cement plant, and at page 6, left column, lines 55-57, state that "The slag from iron reduction furnace

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is a calcium alumino silicate and may be economically worked into Portland cement. On pages 3 and 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that Kuzell discloses delivering slag and dust to a cement plant from a steel making facility which are two of the Markush group recited in claims 1 and 15.

Claim 1 has been amended to indicate that at least three of spent catalyst waste from the oil refining plant, drain sludge from the oil refining plant, slag and dust from the steel making plant are sent to a cement plant. Claim 15 has been amended to indicate that at least three of coal ash from the coal-fired power plant, slag and dust from the steelmaking plant is sent to the cement plant.

Therefore, claims 1 and 15 patentably distinguish over the prior art relied upon by reciting, as exemplified by claim 1,

“A method of operating basic industrial plant complex, comprising: arranging basic industrial plants including an oil refining plant, an oil-fired power plant, a cement plant, and a steelmaking plant in close proximity to or adjacent to each other; and combining said basic industrial plants by a plurality of transporters for partially or completely supplying product, byproduct or waste material from one of the basic industrial plants as a fuel, power source, and/or raw material for products to another plant in the basic industrial plants, transporting to said cement plant at least three selected from the group consisting of spent catalyst waste from the oil refining plant, drain sludge from a storage tank of the oil-refining plant, slag from the steelmaking plant and dust from the steelmaking plant.” (Emphasis Added)

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art of the instant disclosure in view of Kuzell, further in view of GB '384 is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claim 1, as amended, is believed to be in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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